

Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2009, HR 1969

Prime Sponsor: Rep. Chris Smith (NJ)

Co-sponsors: Reps Cao, Lofgren, Pence, Rohrabacher, Royce, Sanchez, Wolf

Summary of Main Provisions

Title I

- The US Government is prohibited from providing non-humanitarian assistance to the Government of Vietnam over FY09 levels unless:
 - Levels of increased non-humanitarian assistance are commensurate with US funding for human rights and democracy programming in Vietnam
 - The President determines and certifies to Congress that Vietnam has dramatically improved its human rights record including:
 - Releasing all political and religious prisoners
 - Respecting the right to freedom of religion and returning confiscated church properties
 - Respecting the right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association
 - Substantial progress towards repealing or revising laws that criminalize democracy related activities
 - Allowing Vietnamese nationals access to US refugee programs
 - Respecting the human rights of all ethnic and minority groups
 - Ending severe forms of trafficking in persons
- Grants the President the ability to waive the prohibition, if such a waiver would promote the purpose of the act or is in the national interest of the United States

Title II

- The President is prohibited from adding Vietnam to the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) unless Vietnam improves labor standards

Title III

- Authorizes \$4 million over two years (FY2010 and FY2011) to promote internationally recognized human rights in Vietnam

Title IV

- Authorizes \$15 million over two years (FY2010 and FY2011) to overcome the jamming of Radio Free Asia
- Promotes educational and cultural exchange programs with Vietnam

Title V

- Reinstates US policy to provide refugee resettlement to Vietnamese nationals
- Authorizes such sums as necessary to protect Vietnamese refugees and asylum seekers

Title VI

- Requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to Congress on the progress of human rights in Vietnam